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AmeriCOM Announces Expanded Board



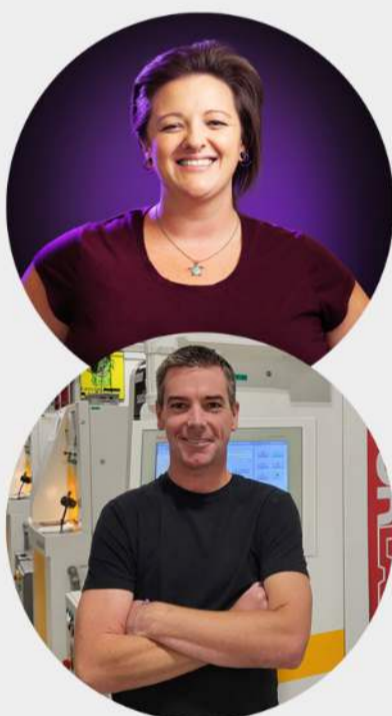
AmeriCOM is excited to introduce seven new board members to help drive our three-pronged mission of creating workforce training programs, developing optics manufacturing technologies, and transitioning those technologies from research into operations. The leaders represent a cross-section of optics manufacturers from across the country. The announcement signifies our growth as we continue to strengthen the nation's precision optics manufacturing industry.

The new board members include:

- **Bob Bicksler** – Past President and CEO of **JML Optical**; Senior Advisor at **Focus Investment Banking**
- **Jennifer Cable** – President of **Thorlabs**
- **Len Chaloux** – Past President of **Moore Nanotech**
- **Birgit Gillman** – Retired, Past Director, Optics Manufacturing of **ZYGO Corporation**
- **Jessica DeGroot Nelson** – Senior Director of Optical Product Development at **Edmund Optics**
- **Rick Plympton** – CEO of **Optimax**
- **Kathleen Richardson** – UCF Trustee Chair Professor, Pegasus Professor, and FPCE Professor of Optics and Materials Science and Engineering at **University of Central Florida**

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Companies with Great Optics Technicians Pay Them to Leave the Shop Floor



Both Sarah Hobaugh, QC Supervisor and Matt DeBree, CNC Production Supervisor benefit from teaching optics at SCCC.

If it seems counterproductive to encourage your top employees to spend less time at work, then allowing them to leave on "company time" may sound downright imprudent. Yet every year, high-performing employees at Thorlabs in Newton, NJ take time away from work to teach optics classes as adjunct instructors at Sussex County Community College (SCCC). Company leaders call it a wise investment that has already paid dividends.

"We've created a self-fulfilling cycle to help us meet the demand for precision optics technicians"

Navid Entezarian

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GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

From Minimum Wage to MIT

Luke Edelman worked minimum wage as a contractor and handyman. He clearly remembers the 98-degree day he was in a cramped crawl space beneath an apartment complex, clad in a thick Tyvek suit with goggles and facemask, wading through a lake of raw sewage, to fix a "poop pipe." He slipped on the slanted wall of the crawl space and splashed the gray water into his face.

Sitting in his car during a lunch break from the job, Luke listened to Connections hosted by Evan Dawson on NPR. The host was interviewing Dr. Alexis Vogt, Endowed Chair & Associate Professor of Optics at Monroe Community College (MCC) in Rochester, NY. Luke didn't know it at the time, but hearing that interview started him on a new path that would lead to one of the world's most impressive universities.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

SPIE Photonics Industry Summit
Washington, DC
Sept. 27, 2023

SPIE Optifab 2023
Rochester, NY
Oct. 16-19, 2023

SPIE 22nd Mirror Technology SBIR/STTR Workshop
Huntsville, AL
Nov. 14-16, 2023

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We are pleased to share this edition of our newsletter with you. If you enjoy this content, please share with anyone you think may also appreciate it!